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ABSTRACT

The number of disabled students in regular vocational training (VT) programs at Cuyahoga Valley Joint Vocational School (Ohio) has increased steadily in recent years. At the school, more than 140 students with diagnosed disabilities are served within a continuum of options as follows: option 1, which entails total inclusion in the VT program with no adjustments to curriculum or specialized support services; options 2 and 3, which provide varying degrees of support personnel and/or curriculum adjustments to help disabled students achieve success in the VT program; and option 4, which is solely for disabled students. Especially in the case of options 2 and 3, the program is based on a team approach that includes input from a vocational evaluator, special needs trainer, vocational special education coordinator, vocational program instructor, the student, the student's parents, and sending district or home school personnel. Student progress is monitored by the program instructor, and interventions to solve academic, attendance, or behavioral problems that may develop are selected by the team. Students follow Individual Education Plans that may be adjusted when necessary. (Appended are transparency masters detailing the continuum of options for special education students and objectives for special needs students in regular vocational programming.) (MN)

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# Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Vocational Programs

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Instructors search regularly for innovative ways to accommodate students with disabilities in their vocational training programs, while still maintaining high instructional standards and expectations for all students. At Cuyahoga Valley Joint Vocational School the number of students in regular vocational training programs has, in recent years, steadily increased. The 140-plus students who have diagnosed disabilities are served within a continuum of options that range from less to more restrictive. "Option 4" programs are for students with disabilities. At Cuyahoga Valley, three programs, Job Training I & II and Warehousing, serve 39 students who have learning disabilities, multiple handicaps and developmental handicaps. The remaining 100+ students are included in the twenty vocational training programs offered at Cuyahoga Valley, and each program includes at least one student with an identified disability. "Option 1" is total inclusion in the vocational training program, with no adjustments to curriculum or specialized support services. "Option 2" and "Option 3", the focus of our presentation, provides support personnel and/or adjustments to the program curriculum to assist the student with a disability to achieve success in the vocational program.

The Special Education Team at Cuyahoga Valley is made up of the Vocational Evaluator, Special Needs Trainer, Vocational Special Education (VOSE) Coordinator, Vocational Program Instructor, Student, Parents, and Sending District, or Home School, Personnel.

The first step to enrollment in a program is the Vocational Evaluation, which furnishes information about the individual's aptitudes and interests. It is used, in conjunction with information from the home school district, by the student to determine appropriate program choice. Once the student is enrolled in a vocational training program, the program instructor monitors that student's progress relative to academics, attendance, and behavior and shares this information with the home school

special education instructor through the VOSE Coordinator. Should problems be encountered, an appropriate intervention procedure is selected by the team. Examples of such procedures include, but are not limited to, peer tutoring, individual tutoring, study group, home school tutoring, and hands-on assistance in lab.

When problems persist in the area of academics, the curriculum is adjusted. The instructor is the critical player in this process. The goal is to provide the student with training toward employment. Specific program competencies are identified as needing to be eliminated from or to be included in the individual's training; this is done on the Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.). For example, a student with a developmental handicap who is currently enrolled in the Auto Mechanics Program is completing his second year in Auto I. During this time his curriculum has been adjusted and he has focused on brake repair and muffler installation.

**OVERVIEW**
**THOUGHTS AND IDEAS**

Because of the **MODULAR APPROACH** to curriculum development, and the fact that each module incorporates **BASIC, INTERMEDIATE**, and **ADVANCED SKILLS** to be taught, Cuyahoga Valley J.V.S. has the unique opportunity to include all students, in every program, regardless of their level of academic achievement or any special needs the student might have.

Because many of the trade areas such as Auto Mechanics have such a diverse employment history, students can learn at their own speed and at their own level. A hard working academically gifted student can work with the ADVANCED SKILLS and go on to be an excellent AUTO TECHNICIAN. **The same opportunity exists for the student with special needs and the desire to learn.** Some utilize the support system that is in place, some do not and function just fine with only minor modifications to the daily operation of the class. What is important to mention is that a student who cannot meet and operate at the advanced skill level DOES NOT mean that they cannot succeed in their chosen field. There are many jobs available in each trade area that only require BASIC or INTERMEDIATE SKILLS to be successful. **THESE ARE THE TASKS WE HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP SO THEY CAN FIND GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT UPON THE COMPLETION OF THE COURSE.**

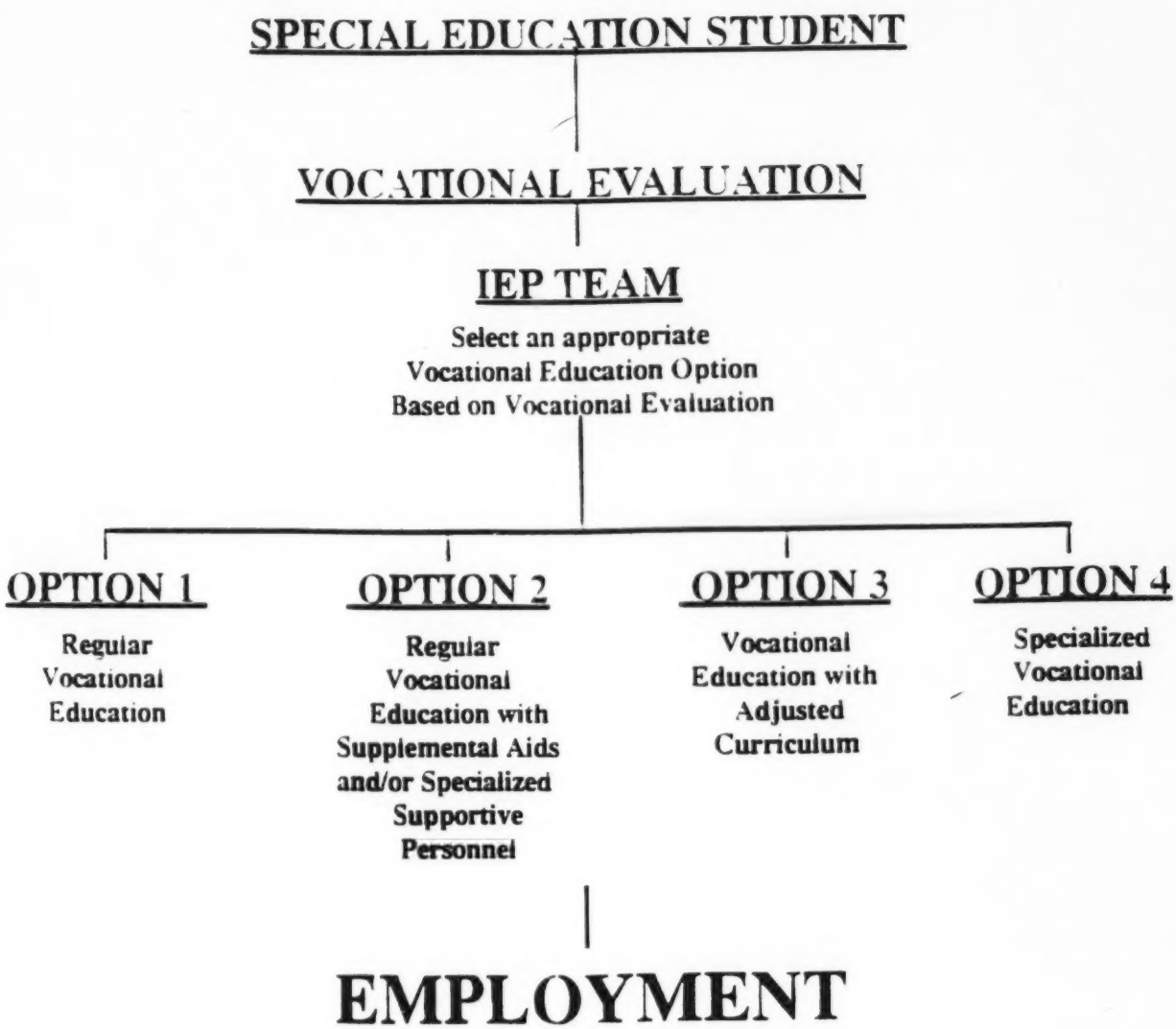
One important item to always remember is that the instructor must always challenge the students to work in a level that is higher than the level they are presently working in.

Students will also surprise instructors on a daily basis by overshooting the Instructor's Expectations. A student who usually operates in the BASIC SKILLS area will sometimes gain total understanding of a particular area of study and start operating in the ADVANCED SKILLS area. The instructor should take advantage of these times and help the student recognize their strengths for future studies and employment opportunities.

REMEMBER: In cases when a student really needs a great deal of assistance, involve the SUPPORT STAFF of The Special Education Team. They have the skill and training to make the difference between success and failure.

The ADVANTAGES and REWARDS of enrolling SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS in regular vocational training programs far out-weighs any disadvantages that might exist.

# A CONTINUUM OF OPTIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS



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# REGULAR VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMING:

# OBJECTIVES

**OPTION 1 OBJECTIVE: The student will successfully complete the goals and objectives of the chosen vocational training program.**

A. Goals and objectives of the selected vocational training program are addressed on the I.E.P.

## ACTIVITY:

Weekly evaluations are completed by vocational instructors for each student enrolled in their program who has an I.E.P.

## TO:

- indicate level of performance, attendance, and behavior

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**OPTION 2 OBJECTIVE: The student will successfully complete the goals and objectives of the chosen vocational training program with tutoring assistance.**

A. The Special Needs Training Assistant schedules the student for regular small group tutoring sessions to address the area of weakness that is identified by either the student(s) or the instructor (the student is achieving below a C average as indicated on the weekly evaluations).

## ACTIVITY:

Teachers are surveyed weekly to identify lesson(s) or activities to concentrate on

## TO:

- address difficulties as identified
- present materials in alternative fashion

B. Vocational Special Education (VOSE) Coordinator schedules the student for individual tutoring

## ACTIVITY:

Vocational Instructor indicates that group session is not sufficient to meet the student's needs

## TO:

- address individual difficulties as identified
-supplement group sessions



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## REGULAR VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

**OPTION 3 OBJECTIVE: The student will successfully complete the goals and objectives of the chosen vocational program with adjustments to the curriculum.**

A. VOSE Coordinator works with Vocational Instructor to modify (adjust) curriculum.

| ACTIVITY | TO: |
|---|---|
| It is determined that the student is capable of all aspects of the curriculum, but with reduced achievement percentages | • Address individual strengths and needs |
| It is determined that the student is capable of achieving specific skills in that field | • Identify skills within the program that are imperative to employment in that field |

B. Changes are made to the I.E.P. to address the Adjusted Curriculum.

| ACTIVITY | TO: |
|---|---|
| An addendum to the I.E.P. is written | • Indicate what adjustments are made in the vocational curriculum<br>• Identify what skills the student will attempt and at what level they will be achieved |